

ADVISES PARSONS'S REMOVAL

FOSDICK REPORTS AGAINST PARK LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.

Says His Connection With "Mr. Hoff's Plan to Accelerate Resoiling Was Discreditable"—Architect Will Ask for Hearing by the Park Board Today.

The dismissal of Samuel Parsons, landscape architect of the Park Board, was recommended yesterday in a report made to Mayor Gaynor by R. B. Fosdick, Commissioner of Accounts. The Park Board meets to-day, and according to the City Hall prophet, will pass the resolution recently offered by Commissioner Stover dismissing Mr. Parsons.

The Fosdick report related to the proposal to resoil Central Park, the interest in the proposal of the New Jersey company owning certain kinds of soil and the competency of Mr. Parsons as a landscape architect.

Mr. Parsons for years has recommended the resoiling, but according to Mr. Fosdick his estimate submitted in 1910, providing for the expenditure of \$1,000,000, of which \$700,000 was to be for the purchase of soils, differed from his earlier estimates in that it provided for the use of an artificially mixed soil composed of humus and loam.

The specifications of the Park Department were changed in 1908 from the old form which asked for mould or garden mould to a formula requiring certain chemical constituents. Under this new form of specifications, the report says, the interests represented by John N. Hoff of the New Jersey company, whom Mr. Parsons had become acquainted with in 1908, competed three times for contracts unsuccessfully. In 1910 the specifications were changed to call for separate delivery of humus and clay loam and specified that the humus must be from land under cultivation. The new specifications, Mr. Fosdick reports, fitted exactly the materials which Mr. Hoff and his associates were prepared to furnish and the evidence before the Commissioner tended to show, according to the report, that Mr. Hoff and his friends had pretty much a monopoly of such materials.

The three contracts let in 1911 for humus and clay loam have gone to J. H. Hale, who has his offices with Mr. Hoff, and buys the materials from Hoff and Peabody. Mr. Fosdick says that there is no evidence to indicate that Mr. Parsons is financially interested in the contracts, but he adds that it is "unquestionable" that the specifications were influenced by Mr. Hoff.

Another point taken up is that of Mr. Parsons's book, "Landscape Gardening Studies," for the publication of which it appeared in the investigation Royal C. Peabody, associated with Mr. Hoff, guaranteed the publishers against loss to the amount of \$500. This book, Mr. Fosdick concludes, "appears to have done much to awaken interest in the proposal to resoil Central Park." "We believe," Mr. Fosdick goes on, "that Mr. Parsons's connection with Mr. Hoff's plan to accelerate the resoiling of Central Park was discreditable and raises a serious question as to the value of his services to the city as landscape architect."

In the matter of Mr. Parsons's efficiency a number of witnesses were examined. Commissioner Stover said the landscape architect was not "constructive" and "not capable of dealing with new problems." Former Park Commissioner Henry Smith said he had formed the opinion that Mr. Parsons was "man of very slight ability" and with "no creative ability." Madison Grant of the Zoological Society and Van Daniel Britton of the Botanical Garden took opposite views, the former critical of Mr. Parsons and the latter favorable. Thomas Hastings and Henry Fairfield Osborn were others who expressed lack of confidence in Mr. Parsons's usefulness.

Beyond saying that the matter would be brought up before the Park Board at its meeting to-day Commissioner Stover declined to comment on Mr. Fosdick's report.

Mr. Parsons and his attorney, Andrew D. Parker, said last night that Mr. Parsons had a promise of a hearing before action was taken on the report of the Commissioner of Accounts. They will speak today in a hearing before the Park Board at its meeting to-day. Commissioner Stover declined to comment on Mr. Fosdick's report.

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As to efficiency, Mr. Parker said that he could get the testimony of a host of friends and admirers of Mr. Parsons to contradict the men who testified before the Commissioner of Accounts and add that most of the statements made by Mr. Parsons in some of their places and naturally enough did not feel entirely friendly to him. As far as the wisdom of the specifications is concerned—when Mr. Fosdick's report quotes an expert of the Department of Agriculture as criticizing Mr. Parsons's work for which he had received from Prof. E. W. Hilgard of the University of California, an expert, approving the materials suggested.

John N. Hoff also denied that any favoritism had been shown to his company and said that any contractor could get the materials specified and could compete for the contracts.

ARRESTS IN A REALTY VENTURE

Second Mortgage Bonds on 40 to 40 East Sixty-second Street Wiped Out.

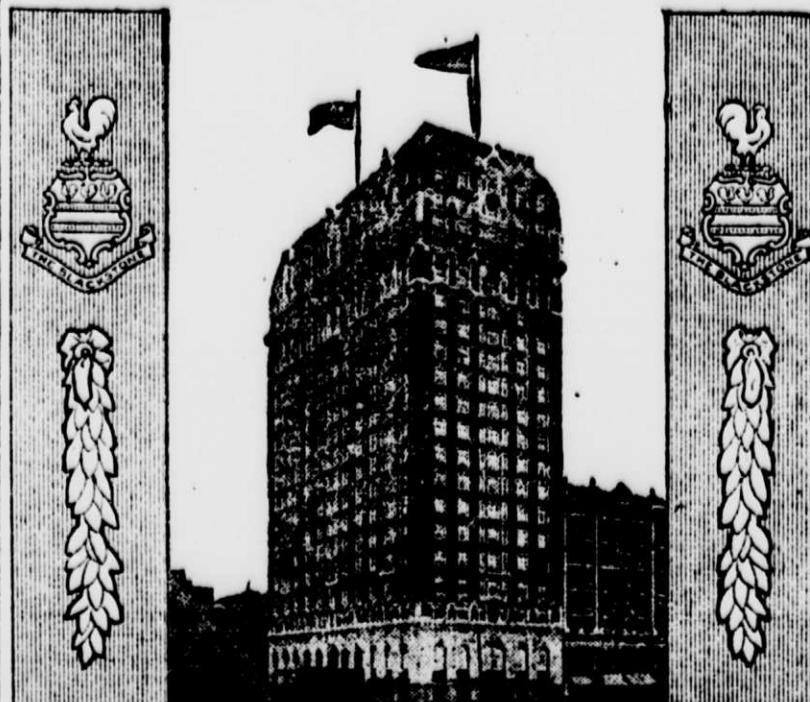
Harry Allen Dalley, William P. Bell and William E. V. Bentz, as president, secretary and treasurer of the 40 to 40 East Sixty-second Street Company, were arrested yesterday on a civil order issued by Supreme Court Justice Hendrick in a suit brought by Jacques Bousse, a lawyer at 2 Rector street, to recover \$30,000. They gave \$5,000 bail.

The complaint alleges that in December, 1908, the defendants bought a plot of land in East Sixty-second street with the intention of erecting a nine story apartment house. They got a building loan of \$200,000 from the City Mortgage Company on a first mortgage, it is alleged, and then issued \$150,000 of bonds to be secured by a second mortgage. The complaint states that the defendants collected \$107,000 of the building loan, paid \$8,000 for the land and put no more money into the building after the foundation was laid, but continuing to let the mortgage to be foreclosed and the property to be bought in by the City Mortgage Company for less than the amount of the mortgage.

The plaintiff says that although the defendants knew they couldn't put up the building they intended to take title to the property and hold it for security that he would get 6 per cent interest and that they had plenty of money to put up the building. They paid him a year's interest soon after he bought the bonds, but he was wiped out when the first mortgage was foreclosed. Defendants say the defendants converted the proceeds of the bond sale.

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